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Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/16. It is based on various sources, including reporting under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, analysis of information provided by 132 resident coordinators in their annual reports for 2013 and other secondary sources. The report provides an assessment of progress made in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women within the United Nations system since the adoption of the aforementioned resolution on 24 July 2013. Particular emphasis is placed on accountability for system-wide work on gender equality and the empowerment of women at both the global and the country levels and on progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan. A total of 62 United Nations entities reported under the Action Plan for 2013, compared with 55 for 2012. The second year of implementation of the Action Plan has seen progress in 14 of the 15 performance indicators.

The report also includes recommendations for further progress for consideration by the Economic and Social Council.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/16, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit at its substantive session of 2014 a report on the implementation of the resolution, including on the promotion of accountability for the work of the United Nations system to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women at both the national and the global levels and on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

2. The report is organized in five sections. Following the present introduction, section II provides an overview of progress in the implementation of the Action Plan; section III provides an assessment of progress in efforts by United Nations entities to promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all operational mechanisms, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other development frameworks; section IV presents an overview of remaining gaps and challenges; and section V includes recommendations for consideration by the Council.

3. The report draws on information and data provided by 62 United Nations entities through their reporting under the Action Plan, the information provided by 132 resident coordinators in their annual reports for 2013 and other secondary sources.

II. Promoting system-wide accountability of the United Nations for its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women

4. In its resolution 2013/16, the Economic and Social Council welcomed the roll-out of the Action Plan and requested the Secretary-General to submit at its substantive session of 2014 a report on the implementation of the resolution, including on progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan. The Action Plan was also welcomed by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

5. Under the Action Plan, almost the entire United Nations system has reported over two consecutive years on a common set of performance indicators. The effective Action Plan process has resulted in substantial progress in the performance of the United Nations system on gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, gaps remain. Consistent and systematic efforts are required to ensure that the United Nations system continues to make progress towards meeting the Action Plan performance indicators by 2017.

A. Methodology

6. The Action Plan measures performance through a gradated self-rating system with five steps: not applicable, missing, approaches requirements, meets requirements and exceeds requirements. "Meets requirements" is the minimum that

the United Nations system should achieve, on the basis of intergovernmental mandates, as explained in the technical notes accompanying the Action Plan performance indicators.[1] In the event of unsatisfactory performance, it is mandatory, and indeed central to ensuring accountability and progress, to establish remedial action plans. This system aims at promoting incremental progress towards excellent performance.

7. Some 90 per cent of United Nations system offices, departments and agencies (hereinafter referred to as entities) reported in 2013, an increase from 82 per cent in 2012, demonstrating sustained system-wide commitment to the Action Plan.[2] The quality of reporting was also somewhat improved, with 62 per cent of remedial action plans considered satisfactory or better, compared with 56 per cent in 2012. Entity submissions were cross-checked by the Action Plan help desk managed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), with entities making revisions in 89 per cent of the cases in which they had been recommended, strengthening the rigour of the process. The analysis for 2013 was similar to that for 2012; entities were grouped into four categories (see figure III), on the basis of the standard United Nations organizational breakdown, which facilitated analysis for the entire system and comparisons between the baseline year of 2012 and the review year of 2013, as well as by entity type, performance indicator and areas of strengths and weaknesses, as presented below.[3]

[1] See www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability.

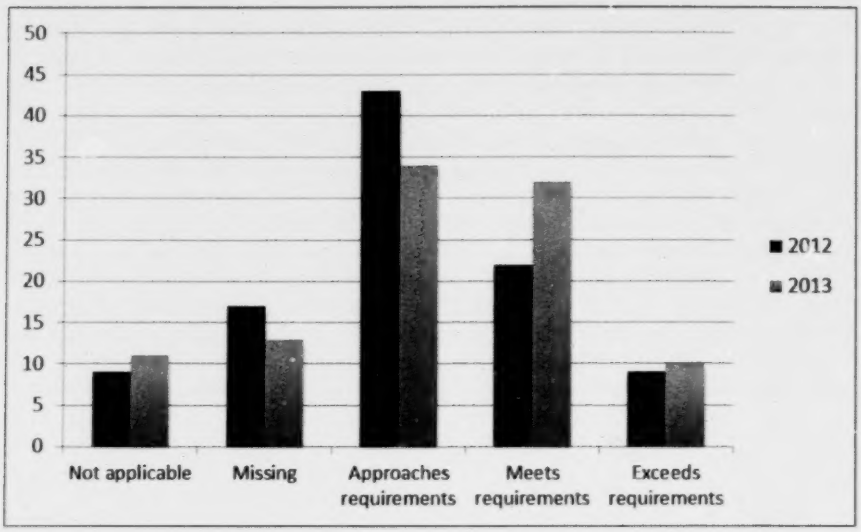
[2] The seven entities that did not report are the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations University, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. Given that only two of six training and research institutes — the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and the United Nations System Staff College — reported, a separate analysis was not carried out of that category. Their results are included in the global analysis.

[3] Data for the entire United Nations system include ratings of "not applicable". Such ratings have been removed from the analysis of strong and weak performance against individual performance indicators.

B. Comparative results for 2012 and 2013

Figure I
Action Plan ratings for the United Nations system, 2012 and 2013

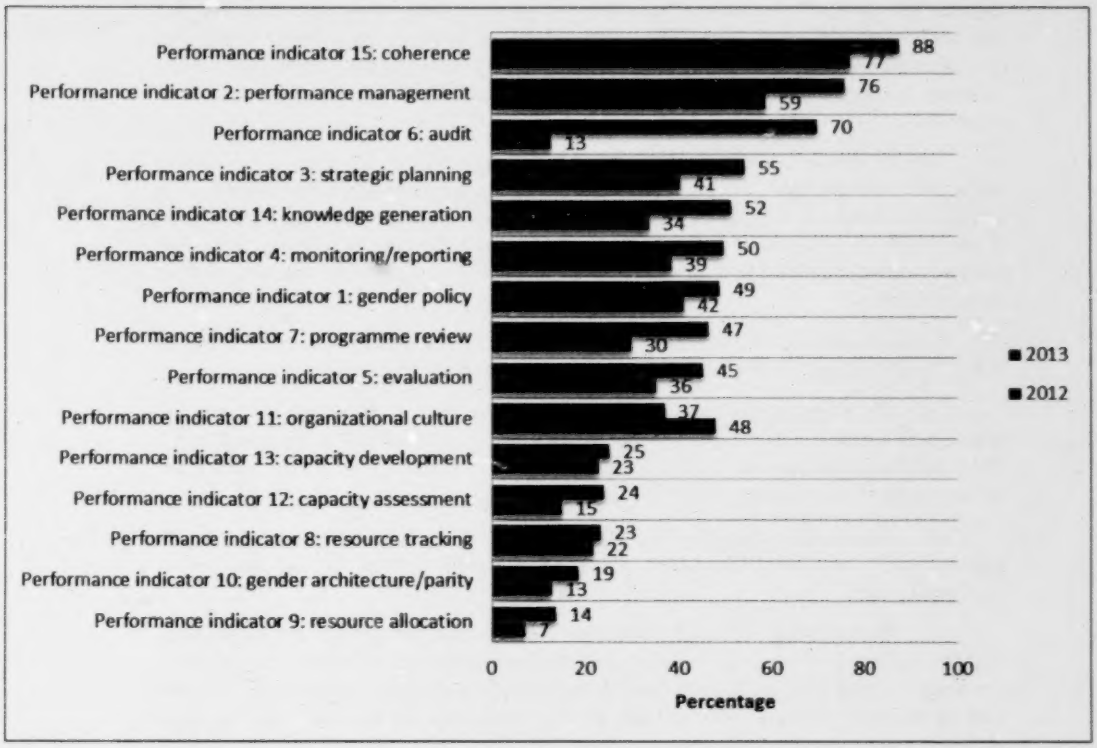
(Percentage)



8. Figure I illustrates the overall improvement by the United Nations system, in particular the encouraging increase in ratings of "meets requirements" or "exceeds requirements" from 31 per cent in 2012 to 42 per cent in 2013 and the decrease in ratings of "missing" and "approaches requirements". Reasons for improvement are set out below. If this degree of progress is maintained, the United Nations system will probably meet the Action Plan targets for most performance indicators by the end of 2017. Continued progress, however, will depend on intensified implementation, enhanced system-wide capacity and coordination and adequate investment in gender mainstreaming, so that the system does not fall back on advances made.

9. Figure II provides a comparison of 2012 and 2013 reporting for entities meeting or exceeding the 15 performance indicators, so as to facilitate an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations system.

Figure II
Percentage of entities meeting or exceeding Action Plan requirements by performance indicator, 2012 and 2013



Strengths

10. The second year of implementation of the Action Plan has seen progress in 14 of the 15 performance indicators, including advances of more than 15 percentage points in the cases of audit, performance management, programme review and knowledge generation. Exceptionally, the performance indicator on organizational culture witnessed a decline in performance, mainly owing to stricter application of reporting requirements.

11. In the case of the audit performance indicator, much system-wide progress resulted from advances made in the Secretariat.[4] For the coherence performance indicator, the United Nations is close to meeting its targets. For performance management, significant progress was also made in the Secretariat, where 100 per cent of its departments, offices and economic commissions now meet the Action Plan requirements. Funds and programmes also improved their performance in that area, with 64 per cent now meeting or exceeding requirements, compared with 50 per cent in 2012.

[4] Requirements for each performance indicator can be found in the technical notes to the Action Plan, available from www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/How%20We%20Work/UNSystemCoordination/UN-SWAP-technical-notes.pdf.

12. The programme review performance indicator saw the entities ranked as meeting or exceeding requirements increase from 31 to 47 per cent. This performance indicator requires programme quality control systems to fully integrate gender analysis, an area central to improved programming on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The United Nations system could make rapid and coordinated progress in meeting the Action Plan requirements on programme review through strengthened application of existing guidance and exchange of good practice.

13. Gender equality and empowerment of women policies constitute a key driver of institutional change. Accordingly, the Action Plan focuses significant attention on policy development. Almost half of reporting entities (29) now have such policies in place, with 13 additional policies planned for 2014. Technical entities, however, require considerable support in this area, with only 1 in 9 meeting the Action Plan requirements.

14. Content analysis of 20 gender policies — 10 developed before the roll-out of the Action Plan and 10 developed thereafter — reveals the following:

(a) On average, policies developed after the Action Plan contain twice as many performance indicators as those developed beforehand (10 as opposed to 5). This demonstrates that the United Nations system is working towards a similar set of targets in an increasingly coherent fashion;

(b) Policies developed after the Action Plan include a greater focus on accountability and implementation plans, as required by the Action Plan (9 as opposed to 6);

(c) Establishing resource allocation benchmarks for gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is a general weakness in policies, as also reflected in the relatively poor performance of the United Nations system with regard to the performance indicator on resource allocation.

Areas for improvement

15. Entities continue to exceed (as opposed to meet) requirements in only a few instances, demonstrating that much remains to be done for the United Nations system as a whole to demonstrate excellence in gender mainstreaming. The system exceeded the Action Plan requirements for all performance indicators in only 10 per cent of cases in 2013, up a single percentage point from 2012. Some performance indicators, however, are beginning to demonstrate excellent performance. Strategic planning, for example, saw the entities rated as meeting or exceeding requirements increase from 13 to 24 per cent between 2012 and 2013, indicating that almost one quarter of the United Nations system is now including more than one results statement and indicator on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the highest results level in the central strategic planning document. Conversely, performance declined under some indicators, including evaluation, resource tracking, gender architecture and parity, capacity assessment and coherence.

16. Although slightly improved, ratings for resource tracking and resource allocation remain relatively poor. Ensuring a commitment to establishing a gender marker system, which is key to demonstrating an entity's commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women, continues to present a very significant

challenge in parts of the United Nations system. Nevertheless, the United Nations demonstrates a groundswell of activity: along with the 11 entities that had a gender marker system in place in 2013, up from 7 in 2012, 14 reported their intention to develop such a system in 2014.

17. The relatively low level of performance on capacity assessment and capacity development, with only a small improvement in the latter (25 per cent of entities rated as meeting or exceeding requirements, compared with 23 per cent in 2012), is of serious concern. The United Nations system requires adequate capacity to fulfil its gender equality and empowerment of women mandate. Capacity development made the least progress of all performance indicators, reflecting challenges in institutionalizing mandatory training for all staff. The UN-Women Training Centre has prepared a capacity assessment tool that can be adapted for use throughout the system, as well as a system-wide introductory gender e-course for non-gender specialists that will be supported by satellite modules specific to the mandate of each entity. It is anticipated that those resources will help to develop much-needed capacity.

18. Entities' performance on gender architecture and parity was among the worst, with limited improvement (19 per cent rated as meeting or exceeding requirements in 2013, compared with 13 per cent in 2012). This performance indicator comprises three subindicators:

(a) With regard to the gender focal point system, most entities reported having gender focal points or equivalents in place (96 per cent). The strength of the gender focal point system continues, however, to be undermined by the lack of seniority of the focal points (only 53 per cent of focal points are at the P-4 level and above) and the failure to formalize their functions (only 42 per cent of entities with focal points have written terms of reference and only 31 per cent have at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to focal point duties);

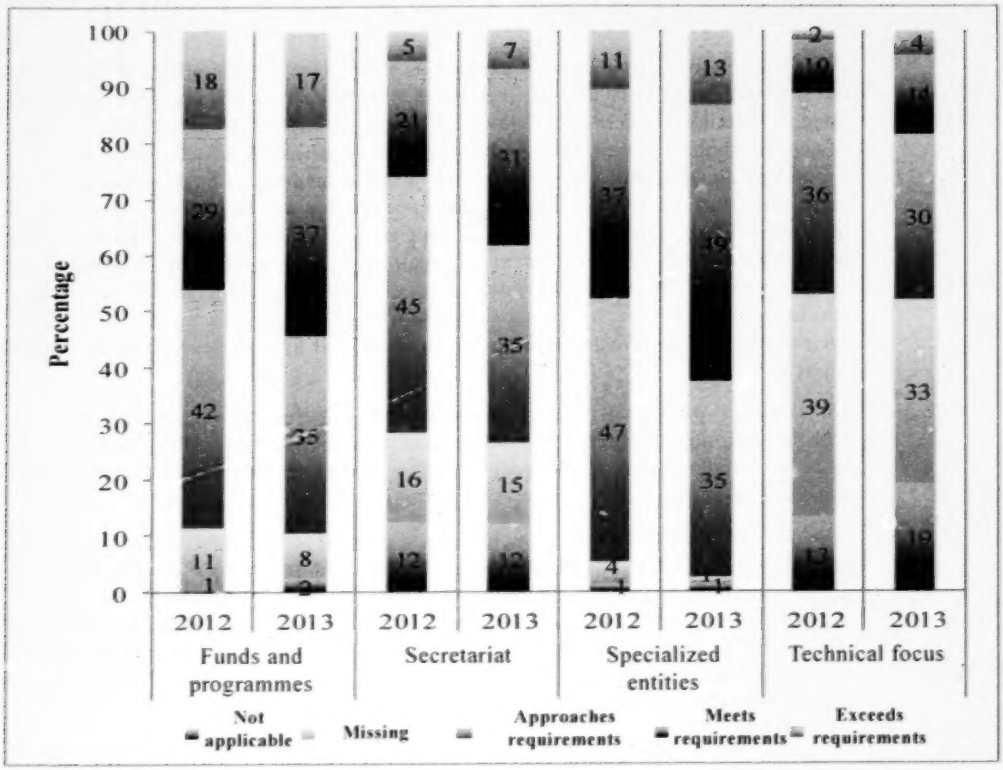
(b) With regard to equal representation of women, some 63 per cent of entities reported, of which 77 per cent had not achieved parity at the P-4 level and above;

(c) As to having the gender department or unit fully resourced in accordance with the entity's mandate, only 27 per cent of entities reported.

C. Breakdown by entity type

19. As noted above, the United Nations system was divided into four entity types in order to determine the level of support required by various parts of the system. Figure III illustrates progress made, by entity type, between 2012 and 2013.

Figure III
Performance ratings by entity type, 2012-2013



20. All entity types registered improvements between 2012 and 2013. The funds and programmes improved their overall performance, with 54 per cent rated as meeting or exceeding requirements in 2013, compared with 46 per cent in 2012. They now meet or exceed requirements in more than 70 per cent of cases for five performance indicators: coherence, knowledge generation, gender policy, strategic planning and organizational culture. Their average performance is brought down by two performance indicators: resource allocation and gender architecture and parity. Specialized entities remain the most advanced and the entity type most likely to meet all the Action Plan requirements first, already meeting requirements in two performance indicators and within reach of doing so for a further three. The Secretariat has made positive progress, with an increase of 12 percentage points in meeting or exceeding requirements between 2012 and 2013, in particular, as noted, in relation to the audit, performance management and coherence performance indicators. Overall performance remains relatively low, however, with only 38 per cent of entities rated as meeting or exceeding requirements. While the technical entities also made progress, this was from a relatively low base. They are rated as meeting or exceeding requirements in only 18 per cent of cases.

21. It is clear from the disaggregated analysis that, if the United Nations system is to meet the Action Plan targets, significantly greater capacity is needed in the

Secretariat — which makes up almost 50 per cent of reporting entities — and the technical entities. The latter, however, have a longer time frame than the rest of the United Nations system to meet or exceed requirements (until 2019).

D. Analysis of remedial action plans

22. Remedial action plans that accompany reporting against each indicator broadly delineate the steps that United Nations entities plan to take to improve performance in terms of timelines, responsibility for follow-up action and resources required. With regard to estimates of resources required, entities identified needs amounting to some $31 million. The highest requirement (some $13.6 million) was identified under the performance indicator relating to gender architecture and parity. The quality of reporting on resources required saw no significant improvement compared with 2012, however. It is noteworthy that, in 70 per cent of cases in which entities did not meet the requirements for a given performance indicator, they also missed the opportunity to identify the resources needed for improvement. This is likely to reduce the potential to promote gender mainstreaming.

23. Entities outlined 91 individual activities that they planned to conduct to meet or exceed the Action Plan requirements, down from 127 in 2012 (as expected, given the improvement in overall ratings). The top areas of activity were similar to 2012: training and capacity assessment, development, revision and implementation of a gender marker system and development of a gender policy. The action plans demonstrated the expanding web of responsibility for individual performance indicators within entities; in 80 per cent of cases, staff other than the gender focal point or unit were designated as responsible for follow-up action.

E. Conclusions and next steps

24. The Action Plan is proving to be a robust accountability mechanism, resulting in numerous positive changes. Consistent coordination by a central hub, administered by UN-Women, efficiently responsive to the needs of the entire United Nations system, has been key to driving engagement and supporting the effective communication and networking central to the success of the Action Plan to date.

25. The encouraging progress between 2012 and 2013 notwithstanding, intensified implementation will be essential if the United Nations system expects to meet its mandate to mainstream gender into its work, for which the Action Plan and its performance indicators constitute a key instrument.

26. With regard to strategic drivers, several strategies put in place by the Action Plan relating to coordination, capacity development and strategic planning may be identified. They include:

(a) Focused coordination, support and networking, facilitated by UN-Women, to promote enhanced coherence, driven by a common vision, a phased and flexible approach to implementation and consistent and systematic efforts directed at increased mutual cooperation and knowledge management, including exchange of good practice;

(b) Leveraging of existing inter-agency networks, including the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the United Nations Evaluation Group and

the Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations Organizations and Multilateral Financial Institutions, to take increased responsibility for the implementation of relevant Action Plan performance indicators;

(c) Decentralization and creation of a wider web of responsibility for gender mainstreaming within individual entities corresponding to Action Plan performance indicators — entities identified different "business owners" from various offices, units and departments, each vested with responsibility for a specific performance indicator;

(d) Capacity development through workshops and tailored support by UN-Women or other entities, such as on gender policies, the gender marker system and evaluation, for gender focal points and non-gender "business owners";

(e) Implementation of performance indicators most likely to drive progress, such as development of policies and inclusion of gender concerns in strategic plans.

27. Reasons underlying the success of the strategies may include:

(a) The Action Plan triggered greater cooperation and healthy competition between entities, created by both a common understanding of United Nations standards and the requirement to report and publish results on the status of implementation of each performance indicator;

(b) Greater senior manager accountability and leadership, such as through the inclusion in the compacts signed by the Secretary-General with all senior managers in 2013 of a performance measure on full compliance with the baseline reporting requirements of the Action Plan;

(c) Enhanced clarity as to what gender mainstreaming means for non-gender specialists and on the differences between equal representation of women and gender mainstreaming;

(d) Continuing engagement by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality;

(e) Enhanced sense of empowerment and agency by focal points for gender mainstreaming, supported also by a broader network of focal points created for and corresponding to various aspects of the Action Plan.

28. The next steps should include:

(a) Dedicated work with the Secretariat and technical entities on those performance indicators on which they are weaker;

(b) Establishment of plans to accelerate performance for each performance indicator, in association with relevant United Nations inter-agency networks on audit, evaluation, communication, strategic planning, human resources and finance and budget;

(c) Significant financial and staff investment in promoting equal representation of women, including through a strengthened organizational culture, in particular the development and implementation of facilitative policies and monitoring mechanisms;

(d) Continued focus on the development of policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women, in addition to strengthening policies in weaker areas, such as resource allocation for meeting the entity's gender mandate;

(e) Capacity development, in particular development of satellite modules for all United Nations mandates to complement the UN-Women e-module;

(f) Intensified development of gender marker systems in a coordinated fashion, involving individual entity and system-wide capacity development, a help desk, dedicated work with the Secretariat and dialogue with the Finance and Budget Network of the High-level Committee on Management;

(g) Six-monthly check-ins with entities in the interim period between reporting under Action Plan, so as to assess progress and prepare for the next reporting period;

(h) Greater attention to entity-to-entity peer reviews, which function as accountability and lesson-learning exercises.

III. Gender mainstreaming into all operational mechanisms

29. In its resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, the General Assembly recognized that progress had been made by funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other United Nations entities in further integrating gender equality and the empowerment of women into their operational activities. Nevertheless, the Assembly also stressed that a substantial increase in investment in outcomes and outputs relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women in United Nations development framework programmes was needed. In response to the resolution, the United Nations Development Group agreed upon a set of common strategic priorities for 2013-2016, including a focus on delivering effective support for accelerating the sustainable, broad-based, inclusive and equitable achievement of the agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The strategic priorities also stress increased investment in and focus on results relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women as an essential prerequisite for reaching the Goals. In addition, the United Nations system developed a comprehensive monitoring framework to help Member States to better assess progress in implementing the resolution. Those instruments are intended to guide agencies, funds and programmes on key policy review priorities as they align their strategic plans with the policy review to enhance coherence, while minimizing the reporting burden.

30. Drawing on the review of 132 annual reports by resident coordinators for 2013, in addition to secondary sources of information, the following section places special emphasis on assessing progress in mainstreaming gender at the country level, including through United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

A. Support to countries seeking to attain internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

31. United Nations country teams undertake common programming at the country level, including through United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, to contribute to national development strategies for poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework is a strategic planning and results-oriented framework that is defined jointly with programme countries, in collaboration with other partners, as a means of identifying how United Nations action supports national efforts. In 2013, priority areas for support by country teams for the promotion of gender equality included ending violence against women (108), reproductive health (104), HIV (88), political participation (41) and education (58). Innovative examples include Lesotho, where the country team adopted a gender-responsive approach to support non-formal education for herd boys, in order to bridge the gender imbalance in access to education.

32. A total of 84 country teams assisted in integrating gender equality throughout national strategy documents, including national development strategies and poverty reduction strategies, compared with 17 in 2004 (the first year for which some of these data are available). In addition, 74 country teams supported national machineries for women, including in the implementation of national policies and action plans on gender equality. For example, in the State of Palestine, UN-Women supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in developing a new cross-cutting national strategy on gender equality, covering the period 2014-2016, and the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development in incorporating gender when drafting a new national development plan. That work was coupled with technical assistance for planning and budgeting teams in six key line ministries.

33. Several country teams were actively involved in supporting national consultations on the post-2015 development agenda. Through the consultations, a wide range of stakeholders, including women's organizations, joined the discussion.

B. Coordination mechanisms at the country level

34. Strengthening the coordination of gender-responsive operational activities at the country level remains a key priority for the United Nations system. At the system level, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality is the main coordination body for inter-agency dialogue relating to gender equality, policy review, effectiveness and coherence, guiding decisions at the programming level. At the regional level, the United Nations Development Group ensures that the United Nations development system delivers high-quality support to countries seeking to attain internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. At the national level, the resident coordinators play a central role in ensuring the alignment of United Nations assistance with national development priorities by leading United Nations country teams in more than 130 countries as the designated representatives of the Secretary-General for development operations.[5]

[5] See www.undg.org/?fuseaction=ViewDocPublic&docID=13421.

35. There are 105 gender theme groups around the world, of which 62 are led or co-led by UN-Women. They bring together representatives of United Nations entities working on gender at the country level — leading to team-building with national partners — to influence the development agenda from a gender equality perspective.

36. In 2013, 91 resident coordinators recognized the role of the gender theme groups, including in providing technical support in mainstreaming programming principles (such as gender equality) and ensuring alignment with the national priorities in the area, monitoring progress towards mainstreaming gender into the integrated annual workplans and United Nations Development Assistance Framework outcomes, supporting capacity-building for government institutions in relation to national gender equality priorities and promoting the inclusion of gender equality networks in planning and programme implementation. For example, the group in Timor-Leste ensured gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations Development Assistance Framework matrix. In Nepal, the group developed a roster of gender experts and an inventory of knowledge products on gender equality for the United Nations country team.

37. The United Nations system has stepped up its efforts to help Governments to achieve the Goals as the 2015 deadline looms, including through joint initiatives that use a multisectoral approach, which has facilitated efforts to tackle gender inequality issues in a coordinated manner.[6] According to the reports of the resident coordinators for 2013, 94 country teams had joint initiatives on gender equality in 2013, up from 43 in 2004. For example, a joint initiative between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN-Women, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was established to harmonize human rights treaty reporting and implementation and to align the concluding observations of the universal periodic review process in the Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of) and Vanuatu, which is expected to lead to a more aligned and comprehensive human rights agenda.

38. Through the "Delivering as one" approach, the United Nations development system has sought to enhance coherence and coordination in United Nations programming work while addressing the multidimensional and interlinked development challenges and delivering better support to countries and development processes and results, including on cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender equality). In Kyrgyzstan, United Nations agencies joined efforts to meet the needs of maternity hospitals in remote areas, which cover more than 35 per cent of births in the country. Consequently, the country is on track to achieve Goal 4.

39. On the basis of lessons learned from the "Delivering as one" pilot phase and as requested in resolution 67/226, the United Nations Development Group endorsed in 2013 standard operating procedures that serve as overarching guiding principles to ensure that the second generation of "Delivering as one" projects is firmly focused on increased results, strengthened accountability, monitoring and evaluation and improved outcomes. UN-Women supported the drafting of guidance for United Nations country teams rolling out the standard operating procedures, stressing the

[6] See http://mdgfund.org/publication/value-added-joint-gender-programmes-findings-and-recommendations-wider-community-un-agen.

importance of the work of the United Nations system on gender equality and other cross-cutting themes in joint programming, advocacy and policy work.

40. Through its presence in the "Delivering as one" countries, UN-Women promotes accountability, strategic advocacy and communications on gender equality issues within the country teams. For example, in terms of breaking new ground in innovative coordination practices, within the "Delivering as one" approach adopted by the country team in Liberia, UN-Women led the development of a unified gender framework that captures how various programmes and joint interventions produce systemic social change and greater gender equality. The success of this approach will be monitored closely with a view to learning lessons that can be shared systematically with other country teams to inform programming approaches.

C. Human and financial resources for gender equality programming

41. United Nations entities continue to invest in increasing their capacity to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into their programmes of work and operational activities. The recruitment processes for the resident coordinators have been strengthened, and the geographic, gender and agency diversity of resident coordinators continues to improve. As at October 2013, 40 per cent of resident coordinators were women, 44 per cent were from the South and 40 per cent were from entities other than the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (see A/69/63-E/2014/10).

42. In addition, in their reports for 2013, resident coordinators noted the benefits of having the expertise of gender specialists, gender focal points and focal point networks available to them. For example, the capacity of the Resident Coordinator's office in Myanmar was significantly enhanced by the appointment of a senior gender specialist who helped to mobilize funds with the support of United Nations agencies and donors. In Kosovo,[7] a part-time professional was hired to support work on integrating women and peace goals and gender-sensitive indicators into European Union programming and project cycle management.

43. For UN-Women, working closely with the resident coordinator system is of paramount importance in its efforts to coordinate gender-responsive operational activities. The Entity supports the fielding of gender advisers within resident coordinator offices in countries in which it has no full-fledged country office. Where there is a UN-Women country presence, the office provides technical support to United Nations country teams on gender mainstreaming in programme areas and to build national capacity. An example of this support is the UN-Women office in Colombia, which, responding to a request from women's organizations, and in close collaboration with the Resident Coordinator's office and in coordination with 11 United Nations organizations in the country, convened a national summit on women and peace to provide women's input to the peace process. The summit brought together close to 500 women from all over Colombia, who made specific demands for the peace negotiators to not stand up until they had reached a peace agreement and for the presence of women at the peace negotiation table, among more than 1,000 proposals on each item of the peace negotiation agenda. One month

[7] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

after the summit, the Government appointed two women to its negotiating team in Havana, increasing women's representation at the talks to 40 per cent of the Government's delegation.

44. In addition, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226, the United Nations Development Group strategic priorities for 2013-2016 request United Nations country teams, together with Member States, to promote joint funding approaches, including through better budgetary planning with common budgetary frameworks, strengthening and rationalizing joint funding mechanisms and joint resource mobilization; supporting the extension of joint funding approaches for the advancement of the "Delivering as one" agenda; and translating good practices on cross-cutting issues, including gender equality, into instruments designed to support implementation. In all regions, UN-Women has dramatically increased its share of allocations from the Peacebuilding Fund. In three years, financing of activities managed by UN-Women from the Fund grew by 14 times (from approximately $500,000 in 2010 to more than $8 million in 2013).

45. Partnerships and resources are critical to leveraging and supporting the gender equality work of the United Nations system, including at the country level. In Azerbaijan, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and the International Organization for Migration developed a joint proposal for United Nations country teams applying to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, aimed at strengthening national capacity to eliminate domestic violence through a series of interrelated strategies. That effort contributed to creating an enabling legal and policy environment for the implementation of legislation on the prevention of domestic violence, improving access to services for vulnerable women in a selected urban area and increasing women's safety in urban areas.

D. Monitoring, evaluation and accountability for gender equality programming work

46. In its resolution 67/226, the General Assembly requested the United Nations system to increase investment and focus on gender equality work and to use several instruments such as the United Nations country team performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women (known as the gender scorecard) and gender markers to enhance accountability for such work.

47. In terms of tackling key gender equality issues during the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework process, the reports of the resident coordinators for 2013 showed that the number of Frameworks containing references to key gender equality issues in at least one outcome statement had increased to 59 in 2013, compared with 49 in 2004, and that 116 country teams had included gender equality elements in their workplans, up from 49 in 2004. That substantial increase promotes a multisectoral and cross-agency approach to the provision of support by the United Nations system to Member States in the area and enhances the reporting on Framework resources devoted to gender equality programming over time. Examples include Uganda, where the gender theme group influenced country team workplans by including seven key gender-sensitive indicators against which joint progress will be assessed. In Guatemala, the current Framework for 2010-2014 was evaluated and gender

analysis completed, with gender-sensitive indicators in the process of being included in the monitoring and evaluation matrix of the Framework for 2015-2019.

48. In 2013, 18 resident coordinators highlighted the use of the gender scorecard to track the contribution of common country programming to gender. In Timor-Leste, following an assessment of the scorecard, the gender theme group became a United Nations country team group with clear terms of reference, membership base and accountability mechanism. The gender theme group leadership model was expanded from a single agency head to a co-chair model in which UN-Women is retained as the head and other agencies serve as co-chairs on a rotational basis each year. In 2014, the country representative of UNFPA will co-chair the group.

49. In 2013, the resident coordinators also stressed the use of gender audits in United Nations agency programmes to assist the country teams to assess effective delivery on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In Iraq, a gender audit conducted by the country team took stock of the current level and nature of gender mainstreaming and empowerment initiatives supported by the United Nations system. The audit covered performance in relation to gender-specific strategies, mainstreaming gender in policy and programmes, leadership and accountability, organizational culture, staff capacity, resources, monitoring and evaluation and partnerships. It found that United Nations Development Assistance Framework outcomes and indicators unevenly addressed gender, with some priority areas lacking gender-specific perspectives. Resource tracking, accountability and staff capacity with regard to gender were identified as additional areas of weak performance.

50. The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, in recent resolutions, including 2012/24 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system and 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, have requested the United Nations system to track gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, including through the promotion of the use of gender markers. Following endorsement by the United Nations Development Group in 2013, common principles and standards for gender equality marker systems to guide the development of an effective and coherent United Nations system approach to tracking resources that support gender equality results have been promoted. They are intended to provide direction for individual entities, including at the national level, that are instituting or improving their gender equality marker systems. Examples include the United Republic of Tanzania, where gender markers are applied to annual workplans to scrutinize allocations. The United Nations country team redesigned the guidelines and checklists to guide the preparation of the annual workplans and reports and promote accountability for the realization of programmatic results for gender equality. Key messages on gender for the "Delivering as one" communications strategy 2013-2016 were developed and used by country teams in public and media outreach events. Technical assistance provided further strengthened the tracking of key gender results.

E. Capacity development

51. Member States have consistently reaffirmed the need to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender and ensure that all

personnel, especially those in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming (see, for example, General Assembly resolution 68/140). In Nigeria, as part of the development process for the third United Nations Development Assistance Framework, 60 programme management team members, implementing partners and government representatives were trained in gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. The evaluation conducted revealed that participants' capacity in the area of gender equality had been enhanced. In addition, gender theme group members developed a gender equality briefing kit to support the commitment of the United Nations system in Nigeria to mainstreaming gender equality and as a basic reference kit for all United Nations staff and partners in the country.

52. To respond to the call made in General Assembly resolution 67/226 for the United Nations development system to draw on the gender expertise available in the United Nations system for mainstreaming gender in programme planning and implementation to ensure that gender dimensions were systematically addressed, including in the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other development programming frameworks, UN-Women, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality, and in partnership with the United Nations System Staff College, developed a roster of United Nations gender experts following a training-of-trainers session organized for 33 United Nations staff with expertise in gender. The roster is available to support United Nations country teams in their efforts to better integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women into their common programming at the country level, including in the formulation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. In addition, an introductory course on gender equality and the empowerment of women for United Nations staff was launched by UN-Women as a means of developing and/or strengthening understanding and awareness of basic concepts for all United Nations system staff at the headquarters, regional and country levels and of promoting behavioural change and the integration of a gender perspective into everyday work.

53. At the country level, examples of capacity-building initiatives include Malawi, where a training-of-trainers session on gender was conducted for 30 United Nations staff and government partners. The newly qualified trainers were then divided into groups to conduct gender training for United Nations staff and government and development partners. To date, three training sessions have been conducted, with a total of 60 participants. In Ukraine, training on mainstreaming gender into United Nations programming delivered by UNFPA and UNDP gender advisers contributed to strengthening United Nations staff capacity to be applied in the common country programming and policy dialogue with the Government.

F. Comparable sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated data

54. Responding to the call made in General Assembly resolution 67/226 for the organizations of the United Nations development system to collect, analyse and disseminate comparable data, disaggregated by sex and age, in a regular and systematic manner, UN-Women worked closely with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in developing a minimum set of 52 gender indicators as a guide for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics. The set of indicators was endorsed by the Statistical Commission in

February 2013 and made publicly available in March 2014 in a data platform developed by the Statistics Division, in collaboration with 14 agencies, including UN-Women. In addition, following agreement by the Commission in February 2013 on the core indicators on violence against women, the Division developed guidelines on how to measure such violence.

55. The reports of the resident coordinators for 2013 reflected that 49 United Nations country teams had supported Member States in strengthening capacity for gender analysis and programming, for which access to high-quality information disaggregated by sex and age is critical. For example, the country team in Belarus developed a project aimed at improving methods of demographic data collection, processing and dissemination in line with the internationally accepted methodology and best practice, in addition to developing the system of gender statistics indicators.

56. Evidence-based policymaking is an area of support to Member States to which country teams accord high priority. Building better sex-disaggregated databases and analysis is a means of guiding country programming investments, supporting programming and results-based frameworks and measuring progress and impact, including for monitoring indicators based on the Millennium Development Goals. For example, Suriname published and disseminated the final report of the fourth round of its multiple indicator cluster survey, with extensive support from UNICEF. The survey allows the generation of sex-disaggregated data for international reporting and monitoring of national progress towards the Goals. To enhance high-level decision-making and engagement, UNICEF supported the development and publication of disaggregated datasheets by districts of Suriname, using data from the survey, so as to provide an overview of the status of children and women with regard to the fulfilment of their basic rights and where the disparities lie. It is expected that this work will spur policymakers to develop strategies and interventions and will also be a useful basis for future research.

IV. Conclusion and remaining challenges

57. It is evident from the outcome of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women that the post-2015 development agenda is being shaped to tackle critical remaining challenges to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals through a transformative and comprehensive approach, and that gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls should be reflected as a stand-alone goal and integrated across all the goals of the new development framework. In addition, it is expected that the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including critical areas of concern, will inform the elaboration of such a framework and the sustainable development goals.

58. To assist Member States to implement a new post-2015 development agenda effectively and ensure that gender equality is adequately addressed in operational activities at the country level, UN-Women finalized an issues brief on gender mainstreaming in developing programming. This forward-looking guidance is aimed at supporting gender mainstreaming in policy, planning and programme development in order to close the gap between global normative agreements on gender equality and their implementation at the national level.

59. Furthermore, discussions concerning the post-2015 development agenda indicate that Member States are keen on improving the accountability of the United Nations system for its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through the definition of system-wide goals and targets and the definition of mechanisms to produce comparable data in tracking the allocation and expenditure of resources. Results from the second year of implementation of the Action Plan indicate that entities' work to achieve and exceed common performance measures are increasingly resulting in positive system-wide institutional changes. Year-on-year progress measured against the 2012 baseline is encouraging. With intensified efforts and adequate resources, the United Nations system has the potential to achieve most of the Action Plan targets by 2017.

60. The entity submissions suggest that the Action Plan is effective in addressing several generic constraints that, in the past, have consistently stalled the progress of the United Nations system in meeting its own mandate to mainstream gender in its work, including insufficient senior management accountability and leadership, inadequate resources and capacity and lack of understanding of gender mainstreaming. The institutionalization of the Action Plan and the progress made in one year provide evidence that the model of gender mainstreaming that has directed the Action Plan has the potential to be highly effective, should the United Nations system sustain its roll-out and full implementation.

61. The Action Plan also facilitates, for the first time for any theme, a uniform, systematic and harmonized analysis of the major challenges facing the United Nations system as a whole, in addition to providing pointers on how they can be overcome. It systematically and objectively identifies the strengths of the system on which progress can be further built and underlines the weaknesses on which the system needs still to focus; it establishes multiple centres of excellence and various hubs of responsibility within and across the United Nations entities corresponding to the performance indicators; and it leads and promotes system-wide coherence, through the coordination role of UN-Women, while simultaneously supporting and strengthening decentralized leadership and ownership. To date, the Action Plan approach is proving both novel and relatively effective, especially given its nascent status (in operation for only two years).

62. At the programming level, United Nations country teams are increasingly including gender mainstreaming in their institutional accountability frameworks and monitoring and evaluation and oversight mechanisms. Nevertheless, monitoring achievements in gender-related outcomes in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks remains a significant coordination challenge. Online monitoring tools have been proven to provide real-time information, decrease transaction costs for reporting and serve as a knowledge management tool. A corporate system developed for such purposes would further enhance the efficiency, accessibility and reliability of Framework monitoring, reducing transaction costs and the time required to design localized tools. Partners should consider enhancing the capacity of UN-Women to allow it to strengthen its support to the United Nations system in measuring gender equality results.

63. Development partners have recognized the Millennium Development Goals as a truly historic undertaking that provided a common vision, galvanized action at the national and international levels and led to many innovative partnerships, all of which contributed to the achievement of remarkable progress. For women and girls,

there have been also significant gains. Nevertheless, there is much more work to be done.

64. An emerging consensus in the consultations towards the post-2015 development agenda is that the framework should be measurable, so as to have effective monitoring of and accountability for development delivery. The collection of data disaggregated by sex and age to support programming work has been enhanced, yet the lack of gender-sensitive indicators, in particular on the part of developing countries, undermines the ability to measure progress effectively and tailor gender-sensitive programmes and services.

65. Inter-agency collaboration at the country level has resulted in more coherent multi-entity approaches at the national level and increased accountability levels for gender mainstreaming results, yet promising practices on gender mainstreaming are not shared and systematic and effective inter-agency collaboration is required on experiences, lessons learned and good practices.

66. The effective roll-out of the standard operating procedures in order to deliver as one United Nations will be a central issue for the "Delivering as one" countries in 2014. Succinct and user-friendly operational guidance on the implications of the procedures for gender programming work in practice could be developed. Updated guidance notes on operational principles as related to the gender work of United Nations country teams would further enhance collaboration.

67. The decision of the United Nations Development Group on a global formula for sharing the costs of the resident coordinator system has been seen as a positive development. Nevertheless, the resident coordinators continue to report that gender equality work is underresourced. For example, while significant progress has been achieved, including in delivering as one United Nations at the country level, much remains to be done, in particular in terms of ensuring that adequate incentives are in place (including the global pooled funding mechanisms) to continue to strengthen gender equality work at the country level, including through the "One United Nations" initiative.

68. Although joint resource mobilization strategies to fund gender-related programmes and operations have been effective in generating incentives for United Nations entities to commit themselves to working through the "One United Nations" initiative, the practice needs to be strengthened as a means of enriching results and impact in terms of better meeting country-specific needs. The resident coordinators noted in their reports that, although progress had been made in harmonizing gender-responsive development work, agencies' policies on visibility and collaboration on joint resource mobilization strategies continued to challenge the United Nations country teams.

69. There is also broad recognition that there is a need for increased levels of human resources to enhance the effective integration of gender perspectives throughout programme work, given that the prevalent understaffing in terms of gender expertise constrains the systematic and effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. United Nations country teams need to fill the critical staffing gap in resident coordinator offices and support the professional development and learning of existing staff. While enhanced coordination will undoubtedly lead to future efficiency gains, start-up investment costs from all United Nations resident and non-resident agencies will be incurred. Greater collaboration within and between

country teams on deploying gender specialists and resources is therefore needed. For country teams operating within complex political environments, having access to at least one senior advisory position to support the resident coordinator is extremely beneficial in tackling gender equality issues.

V. Recommendations

70. There has been notable progress within the United Nations system at the headquarters and country levels in strengthening work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Nevertheless, there are areas in which improvement is needed if gender mainstreaming is to deliver results in advancing gender equality and increasing the empowerment of women, which will be critical to ensuring that the United Nations system is ready and fit for purpose to implement the post-2015 development agenda and deliver the new sustainable development goals, including with regard to gender equality.

71. The Economic and Social Council may wish to request the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies and funds and programmes:

(a) To intensify the implementation of the Action Plan in order to meet its targets by 2017;

(b) To invest adequate human and financial resources to tackle identified areas of weakness that threaten to impede progress, including in the areas of gender policies, capacity development, resource tracking and allocation, equal representation of women and organizational culture;

(c) To ensure that the various accountability mechanisms of the United Nations system provide for more coherent, accurate and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting on gender equality results and on the tracking of gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, including through the promotion of the use of gender markers;

(d) To continue to better align gender equality programming with national priorities across sectors, and encourage States and stakeholders to strengthen gender mainstreaming into all areas of development, including through national and regional preparations for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(e) To strengthen the coordination of gender-responsive operational activities through existing coordination mechanisms at the country level and in partnership with national stakeholders;

(f) To encourage the United Nations development system to institute greater accountability in evaluations conducted by country teams by including gender perspectives in such evaluations;

(g) To expand and strengthen the use of the gender scorecard as a planning and reporting tool for assessing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming for use by the country teams in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

(h) To substantially increase the investment in and focus on outcomes and outputs relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the United

Nations Development Assistance Framework programmes, including by strengthening the predictability of funding, broadening the donor base and increasing the flexibility of non-core resources;

(i) To encourage the United Nations development system to acquire sufficient technical expertise for gender mainstreaming in programme planning and implementation to ensure that gender dimensions are systematically addressed, and in this regard draw on the gender equality expertise available in the United Nations system, including at UN-Women, to assist in the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other relevant programming frameworks;

(j) To encourage the collection, analysis and dissemination of data, disaggregated by sex and age, in addition to monitoring capacity, in order to guide country programming, and to support the preparation of organization-wide and country-level documents, such as the strategic, programmatic and results-based frameworks, and to continue to refine their tools for measuring progress and impact.